

Heroin Anonymous

With the birth of the 12-Step Recovery system first published in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* in 1939, over four dozen verified 12-Step programs have started with several more affiliated with specific religions or institutions that fall outside the 12-Tradition model. SPONOR would like to help increase awareness of these growing fellowships and hope this will be the first of a series of articles on 12-Step fellowships.

WHAT IS HEROIN ANONYMOUS?

Heroin Anonymous is a non-profit group of men and women who have found a solution to heroin addiction. HA is a fellowship of complete abstinence from all drugs and alcohol. We are recovered heroin addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay sober.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop suffering from heroin addiction. There are no dues or fees for H.A. membership. H.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy and neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other heroin addicts to achieve sobriety.

Heroin Anonymous is concerned solely with the personal recovery and continued sobriety of heroin addicts who turn to us for help. We do not provide drug counseling, medical or psychiatric treatment, chemical dependency treatment, or therapy of any form.

Our members consist of individuals who have found a better way of life. We have recovered from our heroin addiction

and simply wish to offer help to those who suffer. We are fully self-supporting, we accept voluntary contributions from our members for our expenses, and we respectfully decline outside contributions.

Our Program of Recovery was adapted from the program developed by *Alcoholics Anonymous* in 1935. We apply the Twelve Steps as done in A.A. (which we are not affiliated), which involves one heroin addict helping another to achieve freedom from their heroin addiction.

We find that individuals who have recovered from their heroin addiction can offer understanding, compassion, relatedness, fellowship, and direction where other methods may have failed.

In our Fellowship you will see one heroin addict helping another, freely passing on their experience to the next person who is desperately searching for an answer to their own heroin addiction.

Singleness of Purpose

When other addicts are asked to not share in our meetings, we are not excluding them. It is our way of saying we have limitations in our effectiveness with their addiction and there are others who are better qualified than us to help them. By main-

taining our singleness of purpose we establish realistic expectations with whom we can help and it promotes humility which is essential in our recovery.

Singleness of purpose reminds us of our primary purpose - to help the suffering heroin addict. Singleness of purpose is rooted in humility and helps us to recognize our limitations. We cannot help everyone. When claiming we can help other addictions, we dilute our fellowship and we lose sight of the needs of the heroin addict. By respecting our singleness of purpose and practicing it in our meetings, we promote unity within our groups and contribute to the survival of our fellowship. By accepting our limitations, we can concentrate on our work with other heroin addicts.

HA Identification

We are heroin addicts who have found a better way of life. No more stealing to cop dope. No more lying to maintain our habit. Being dope sick is a thing of the past. Worrying about our next fix is no longer a problem. Having to get straight in order to function does not exist for us. We have found a way to live that is free from heroin addiction.

Our only desire is to be helpful to the suffering heroin addict. If you wish to join us, we will share with you what we have found. There are no dues or fees for membership. The only requirement is a desire to stop suffering from heroin addiction. Help is available for all heroin addicts who wish to recover.

How was HA Started?

Paul F, a sober heroin addict in AA, received a phone call on July 26, 2004 from Mike S, a fellow heroin addict. Mike asked Paul, "How come there is no Heroin Anonymous?" It was at that moment it was decided to start HA so we heroin addicts could have our own fellowship where we could be with others who truly understood our experience with heroin addiction.

On July 28, 2004, Paul and Mike located a place for a meeting and began distributing fliers to all of the heroin addicts they knew in the other 12 step

fellowships. They found several sober heroin addicts who were enthusiastic about having their own program.

The first HA meeting was held on Thursday, August 12, 2004 at the Hope House, a half-way house for alcoholics and addicts, at 316 N. 11th Way in Phoenix, Arizona. Present were Paul F, Mike S, Nancy R, Tom M, David T, Rebekah B and Mark T.

In that first meeting, Paul F was elected as the Literature Chairperson and he began writing pamphlets and meeting formats for our fellowship.

In no time more and more HA meetings were being started and Phoenix HA Inter-group was formed on November 11, 2004. HA now has meetings in 18 states and in the UK and Canada.

This article is drawn from materials found at <http://heroin-anonymous.org>



Contact:

If you would like to start a meeting in your area, send us your mailing address and we will mail you a start up kit at no cost. We want all heroin addicts who have a desire to recover to know that you are not alone and there are other heroin addicts who have found a way to recover from heroin addiction.

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